

**THE VERY FIRST  
WEALDSTONE FC  
A HISTORY FROM 1883 – 1895**



**BY  
ROGER SLATER**

**PART FOUR: – THE BEGINNING OF THE END**

*Cover photo: Early in 2016 I received an email from John Perry about a family member, George, who had played for the first Wealdstone FC in 1892-3 and had a medal from the Middlesex Junior Cup Final of that year. What transpired after some research and a couple of meetings was that George Perry had in fact played for the club over five seasons but had not played in the final as he had been injured in an earlier match. The medal, pictured on the cover, was attached to an Albert Watch Chain with a pocket watch. The 'set' had, we believe, been presented to George by the club to record his part in the cup run prior to the final. He was to return to play the following season before a further injury, a broken leg, which was to end his career.*

## INTRODUCTION

Thanks are due to Matteo Tonna for his efforts and assistance with researching match reports and details that have been used to build this history. Thanks also to Terry Hissey and Martin Read for the read through and corrections!

When I started research in 1997 for *'The History of Wealdstone FC'*, I began from the point that we all thought we knew, the formation date of 1899-1900. That had been detailed on club badges and noted as the formation of the club when the Golden Jubilee Handbook was published in 1950. Compiling the information available at the time didn't take long as much had been destroyed when the club left Lower Mead, still more was destroyed in a subsequent fire, but from the remnants, and armed with a few phone numbers, research began.

Reading the Jubilee Handbook, it was very soon apparent that 1899-1900 wasn't the formation date of the club but a step on the way, not least as the quoted match report from the fixture against Northwood in 1899 stated that *"the club wore the same colours"*. Further investigation in the Harrow Observers of the time also brought forward comments that *"a number of the same players were used"*. The question was: same as what? And when? It started a four-year process reading backwards in time establishing the facts as they were recorded and were then available. With reasonable clarity, links were established back to the formation of two clubs, 'The Oaks' and 'Cogswell & Harrison' in Wealdstone in 1887, though there were a couple of older Harrow clubs that at the very least had a number of players in common.

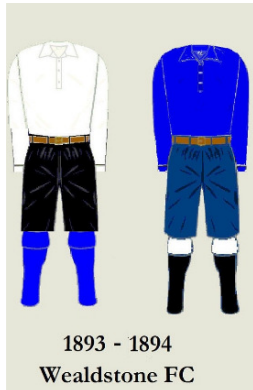
At that time, the path was outlined but some pieces of the jigsaw were missing, so the date of formation remained the same. In an effort to build as complete a record of the club as possible, research continued and, as more information has been found over twenty years later, gaps have been filled and we can now tell the story of two Wealdstone Football Clubs.

What follows here is the story of the first of these clubs and the earliest days of the modern club.

## THE BEGINNING OF THE END

1893-94

Following their cup final appearance, though defeated, Wealdstone seem to have gained a much higher profile locally as the number of fixtures they were able to announce prior to the season starting increased. They had also included a number of 2<sup>nd</sup> team fixtures. Once the season got underway newspaper coverage also increased, despite Harrow Athletic still being the senior side.



1893 - 1894  
Wealdstone FC

At the end of October Wealdstone returned to Junior Cup action with a first round tie away to Holborn Circus, the Stones running out comfortable winners by 5-0, with eight of the previous season's finalists in the side.

Three weeks later both Harrow Athletic Reserves and Wealdstone were in Junior Cup action, the Wealdstone side continuing their success with another away win, this time to Hayes, also beaten 5-0 as were Holborn Circus in the previous round. Harrow's 2<sup>nd</sup> team though suffered a defeat (having had a bye in the first round), once again to an Uxbridge side. Since the days as Harrow Town, it was the fifth consecutive defeat to the Uxbridge club and in eight fixtures since 1885, Harrow had only recorded one victory.

The Harrow first team had similarly received a bye in the first round of the Senior Cup, but they too were unable to progress, losing away to the Fulham side 0-3 just two weeks later. Harrow had high hopes of progressing in the competition, it had been declared as the target for the club at the AGM, but the result meant that their only chance of silverware was to be the West Middlesex Cup, the final of which had seen them defeated (by Uxbridge) two seasons earlier.

Both local sides had some success in their friendly matches throughout the season and Harrow just shaded the honours in matches against the Wealdstone side, winning two to Wealdstone's one. Each was a close game with two decided by the odd goal and the other only a 2-0 victory for Harrow.

Early in the New Year, cup ties again came to the fore, as Wealdstone's involvement in the Middlesex Junior Cup was ended in the third round as they lost at home to the Uxbridge Reserves that had beaten Harrow earlier in the season. It was Wealdstone's first defeat to the side in three matches played, though they had played much of the match with ten men after George Perry had been injured when an Uxbridge player attempted to kick the ball but missed: *"an Uxbridge forward made a rush at the ball, but instead of kicking the leather, caught the shin of one of the Wealdstone team named Perry, a local postman. Perry was unable to rise from the ground so play was suspended. The injured man was placed on a hurdle and conveyed home, and when Dr Butler examined the leg he found that the bone had broken in two places. This was an unfortunate mishap for the home team. Perry was a first-class man and the Stars relied much upon his play for success"*. The injury was to finish George Perry's career as a player.

also resulted in a draw, one goal each. The Wealdstone Reserves gained an easy victory over the St. Albans (Chiswick) last Saturday, at Wealdstone. Seeing that they had a weak team to contest, the "Stones" began to press at the onset, and managed during the afternoon to gain four goals, whilst they only permitted their opponents to break through their defence one.

Harrow Observer 10<sup>th</sup> November 1893

**FOOTBALL.**—The match between Wealdstone and Uxbridge with the Middlesex Junior Club had a sad termination on Saturday. The home club was considered to be strong, and the Uxbridge team were also in good condition, so a most exciting game was expected. Hundreds of people flocked to the Wealdstone Ground at Greenhill to witness the contest. Play began in earnest shortly after three; but the ball had scarcely got from end to end before an Uxbridge forward made a rush at the ball, but, instead of kicking, the leather caught the shin of one of the Wealdstone team named Perry, a local postman. Perry was unable to rise from the ground, so play was suspended. The injured man was placed on a hurdle and conveyed home, and when Dr. Butler examined the leg he found that the bone had been broken in two places. This was an unfortunate mishap for the home team, for Perry was a first-class man, and the Stars relied much upon his play for success. The home team, however, played up well, short-numbered as they were, and certainly showed the best form; but luck was against them, and the game ended in the defeat of Wealdstone by two goals to one.

Harrow Observer 19<sup>th</sup> January 1894

**Wealdstone F.C.**—It has been decided by the members of the Wealdstone Club to give Perry, who broke his leg in the match v. Uxbridge (R), a benefit on February 10th, when playing a return with Harrow Athletic.

**Harrow Gazette 26<sup>th</sup> January 1894**

to replace his lost wages. The match resulted in an entertaining 1-1 draw.

Following the Wealdstone tie, Harrow Athletic faced a West Middlesex Cup match against Hillingdon. Harrow travelled to their opponents and dispatched them with some ease, 6-1. It may not have been the primary Middlesex competition but Harrow were in good cup form, now with the West Middlesex Cup their target.

That became one step nearer reality at the beginning of March when 8<sup>th</sup> Hussars were opposed in the semi-final played once again at the White Hart Ground in Southall, the local team winning 5-3 to reach the final. On the same day, Wealdstone Reserves faced a Wealdstone Mission team replaying a challenge after what must remain one of the strangest reasons for an abandonment. The previous weekend, no result was recorded (the Mission were winning 1-0 at the time), as both teams left the field in protest at an offside decision awarded by the referee. Harrow won three and lost one of their matches in the lead up to the cup final which was played on the 14<sup>th</sup> April, when they took the field against Hanwell.

Four weeks later, the Wealdstone club announced a benefit match for Perry in a return fixture with Harrow Athletic. Not only had the injury ended his playing career, he was unable to work as a postman and the collection made on the day would have gone some way

**WEST MIDDLESEX CHALLENGE CUP.  
FINAL TIE.**

The two clubs who had the honour of appearing in the final round of the above Cup, which was decided on the White Hart enclosures, Southall, on Saturday last, were Harrow Athletic and Hanwell, and although a great deal of interest has been lost in the competition, owing to the fact of Uxbridge only entering a reserve team, still there was a fairly representative crowd present. All through the competition the finalists have been very doubtful, and Hanwell just managed to scrape into the final by getting the better of Hounslow by a goal, although Harrow came off with a slightly better average in their encounter with the 8th Hussars, and as a consequence were somewhat the favourites in the game under notice. The day was not such an ideal one as that of the Saturday previous, when the Grenadier Guards "knocked" under to Uxbridge in the "grate site" for the County championship, as it was somewhat marred by the rain which fell at intervals. The teams arrived on the enclosure almost simultaneously, the Harrow team wearing white shirts, whilst the Hanwell men were clad in red ones, and when Mr. Greening, of the West London League, called them to attention, they lined up as under:—Harrow Athletic—McMillan (goal), N. H. Smith and R. R. Barker (backs), Roseveare, Woodbridge and C. Page (halves), J. E. Page and Kavanagh (right) R. Bosworth-Smith (centre), Cooke and Hartley (left) (forwards). Hanwell—Burt (goal), Lane and Huntley (backs), Butler, Andrews and Norton (halves), Joy and Hammond (right), Addis (centre), Field and Dr. Nuthall (left) (forwards). From the foregoing names it will be seen that Harrow had whipped together a very strong eleven, whilst their opponents were unable—through various causes—to place their full team in the field. Defending the entrance goal, and with the wind at their backs, Harrow were the first to attack, but the final of a sharp run on the right was the ball going behind. Joy and Hammond then tried to force the pace for Hanwell, but Barker was the means of checking them, and the next minute the sphere was forced through the Hanwell goal from a scrimmage. Having opened the scoring, Harrow thirsted for more, and Kavanagh forced a corner off Huntley, the outcome of which was the defeat of Burt a second time, Roseveare doing the trick. The game was barely ten minutes old, and yet Hanwell appeared a beaten team, for Kavanagh

added a third goal before they seemed to awaken to the important fact that their prospects of winning the West Middlesex Cup were growing very dim. Perhaps it was the cheers of their supporters, or maybe, it was the sarcastic shout of "They dun' no where they are," that roused the Hanwell team, for with the downfall of their citadel for the third time, they seemed to throw off the lethargy which seemed to have fallen on them, and a much more even game resulted. After a series of rather open exchanges, Joy spurted away for Hanwell, and sent in a well-directed shot. There was not much sting in it, but if Nuthall had been more confident a goal might have been placed to the credit of Hanwell, for McMillan did not get the ball away at all well. Nuthall was lying well up, but he seemed to hesitate, and as "the man who hesitates is lost," so was the chance of defeating McMillan, for Smith relieved the fears of Harrow supporters by putting the sphere well down the ground. A sharp attack on the Hanwell citadel ensued, but by dint of hard kicking and fearless tackling, Harrow were driven back, Field showing up well for Hanwell in the attack which followed. The downfall of the Harrow goal was still deferred, however, Smith and Barker playing a grand game, staving off several tricky runs and final shots. It wanted but a very few seconds to the interval, when Harrow worked the globe towards the Hanwell goal. Huntley essayed to clear, but miskicked badly in the mouth of goal, and J. E. Page easily placed No. 4 to the credit of Harrow. There was barely time left to start the ball again, when Mr. Greening signalled for the lessons, etc., with the score standing—Harrow Athletic, 4 goals; Hanwell, nil. Harrow led off on the restart, but Norton relieved, and Addis getting away, passed out to Joy. Barker again proved his worth, for he was more than a match for Joy, and punted the sphere to Cooke, who plied Burt with a shot, but the Hanwell custodian cleared well, a shot from the foot of Kavanagh directly afterwards meeting with the same result. Still, Hanwell played a plucky game, and some pretty combination on the left wing ended in Field plying McMillan with a low swift shot. McMillan just managed to clear, but Hammond met the return, and opened the scoring for Hanwell. Harrow were not long in retaliating, Kavanagh and Fa'e making the pace, and the letter centred to Bosworth-Smith, who in turn headed to

Cooke, that player promptly converting. There was a tinge of off-side about this point, but the appeal was not allowed. Harrow still pressed, and several shots were put in, until the sphere at last went behind. The backs tried a little "fancy" play when they again kicked off, but it did not come off, Bosworth-Smith being too quick for them, and intercepting the pass, he sent in a terrific shot which skimmed the bar. From the goal-kick, Harrow returned to the attack, which ended in J. E. Page defeating Burt with a clinking shot at close quarters. Hanwell went off with a rush from the re-start, but were checked by the opposing halves before getting really dangerous. Hammond and Joy were not to be denied, however, and returning to the attack, Hammond lowered Harrow's lead by a goal. At this point of the game, Hanwell were having as much of the play as their opponents, and quite deserved the third goal which Joy secured for them. This was scored some ten minutes before the call of time, and although both citadels were afterwards attacked, no further scoring resulted before the call of time, when the score read—Harrow Athletic, 6 goals; Hanwell, 3 goals; and thus Harrow Athletic secured the much coveted honour of having their name placed on the West Middlesex Cup for the first time since the institution of the competition. Taking the game all through, the winners were by far the superior team, their display being more finished than their opponents. McMillan did not have very much to do, and that little he did not do very effectively, as he almost invariably "muffed" his saves; the backs played a grand game throughout, Smith being slightly the better of the two; of the halves, Roseveare was the pick, but his conferees worked well. The forwards all played a winning game, and it would be difficult to individualise them, each trusting one to another, and having full confidence in their back division to support them. Hanwell lost the Cup in the first ten minutes of the game, when they appeared paralysed. Burt saved well occasionally, but never showed anything like form, whilst the backs were very poor; the halves worked hard, but lacked cohesion, and the forwards although at times combining well together, failed when near goal. After the game was over, the Cup was presented to the captain of the winning team—Mr. McMillan—by Mr. G. Gibson, of Southall, amidst the greatest enthusiasm, after which each member of the team was called up to receive their medal, and each recipient was greeted with loud applause. Cheers were also given for the Hanwell team, Mr. Gibson, and the referee.

**Bucks Advertiser 20<sup>th</sup> April 1893**

*"The two clubs that had the honour of appearing in the final round of the (West Middlesex) cup, which was decided on the White Hart Ground, Southall on Saturday last were Harrow Athletic and Hanwell, and although a great deal of interest has been lost in the competition, owing to the fact of Uxbridge only entering a Reserve team, still there was a fairly representative crowd present.*

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**The Harrow Athletic team of 1894**

Back: GE Kay, CE Cater, H Woodbridge, JH Carew-Hunt, H Hills, W Bentley

Front: WE Kavanagh, JE Page, SH Smith (capt.), HM Darville, EAA Cooke. (© Roger Slater original image re-coloured by RGS 2020)

Taking the game all through, the winners were by far the superior team, their display being more finished than their opponents. McMillan did not have very much to do, and that little he did not do very effectively, as he almost invariably muffed his saves : the backs played a good game throughout, Smith being slightly the better of the two : of the halves, Rosveare was the pick, but his confreres worked well. The forwards all played a winning game, and it would be difficult to individualise them, each trusting one to another, and having full confidence in their back division to support them.

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At the end of the season, initiated by the Harrow Athletic Club, the Wealdstone team merged into their local rivals. The declared intention was to create a side strong enough to win the Middlesex Senior Cup, as it was felt that playing two separate sides lessened the chances. It was expected to ensure that for the 1894-5 season, there would be sufficient quality to make a real challenge for the trophy, and the club was strong enough in numbers that on many occasions three teams would be fielded on a Saturday.

**The Wealdstone Football Team.**—This team, which did good work last season, has decided to join the Harrow Athletic Club. This will enable the club to send out three teams each Saturday during the present season, and what is more, three good teams. It is to be regretted that the Rugby players have severed their connexion with the club, or otherwise, as far as football is concerned, it would have possessed some of the best players, in both sides of the game, in this part of Middlesex.

**Middlesex Courier June 1894**

For the much in demand Harry Darville and William Bentley (who appear in both team photographs above), it meant that their two clubs would become one. We are left to wonder how important they may have been in proposing or arranging the merger at the time.

**1894-95**

**SERIOUS FIRE AT HARROW STATION.**—Early on Tuesday morning Messrs. Cogswell and Harrison's Gun Factory, at Harrow Station, was found to be on fire. The night watchman, seeing that he could not cope with the flames, which broke out in the centre of the large workshop, immediately summoned assistance. The manager, Mr. Lizard, and several workmen were quickly on the scene, and a messenger was sent to Harrow for the fire brigade. The flames however soon spread, and all the workmen could do was to pour water on the adjoining buildings to prevent them catching fire. By the time the brigade arrived three sheds were completely destroyed the roof and walls having fallen in a short time after the fire was discovered. A large quantity of valuable machinery was entirely destroyed, and the damaged is estimated at thousands of pounds. A spark from a passing engine flying through a broken window is said to be the cause of the conflagration.

Reported in various places on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 1894, the factory of Cogswell & Harrison, the firm that had brought organised football to the Wealdstone village, caught fire and was sufficiently damaged that it would not be rebuilt, the firm moving to new premises near Newbury, Berkshire shortly afterwards.

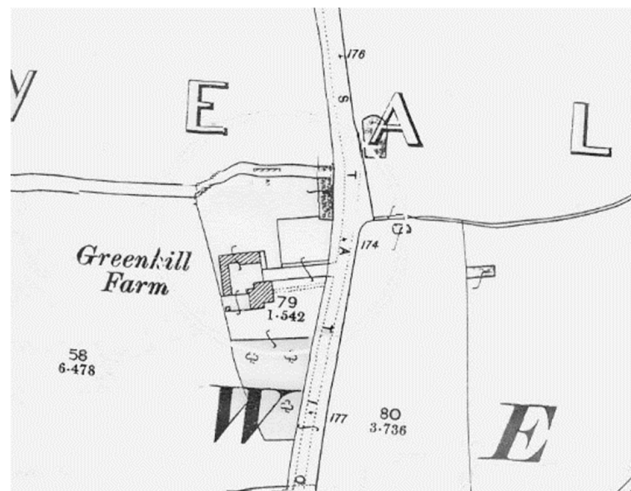
Later reports indicated that the gun factory, adjacent to the steam railway line had suffered as embers thrown out by a passing train had ignited wood shavings, these in turn setting fire to the factory, workshops and offices.

Following the merger of Harrow Athletic and Wealdstone FC under the Harrow Athletic name, a strong season was expected.

**Watford Observer 21<sup>st</sup> July 1894**

The merger had been announced with some surety as “to provide a challenge for the Senior Middlesex competition that has so far eluded both clubs”. A new ground was also secured, the team moving to Greenhill Farm, the same farm that was later to become the site of Wealdstone FC's Lower Mead.

The season opened with a trial match, set up as a First Team v Reserves as Mr. C Page's XI v Mr. G Kay's XI, and there was some indication in the make-up of the two sides of Wealdstone's place in the merger.



Each of the sides featured six Harrow Athletic players, two trialists and three former Wealdstone players (and two of those had previously played for Harrow Athletic as well!)

**HARROW ATHLETIC FOOTBALL CLUB.**—The season of this club will open with a game between Mr. C. Page's Eleven and Mr. G. E. Kay's Eleven. The teams are as follows:—Mr. C. Page's Eleven (play in colours)—Goal, H. Hills; backs, S. H. Smith and T. Barnes; halves, C. Page (captain), H. Berry and A. Feiron; forwards, W. E. Kavanagh, A. H. Stevens, H. Darville, J. D. Hartley, and E. A. A. Cooke. Mr. G. Kay's Eleven (play in white shirts)—Goal, — Griffiths; backs, G. E. Kay (captain), and — Cater; halves, A. P. Salt, T. Harde, and W. Baker; forwards, E. J. Fisk, F. Parker, A. E. Darville, T. Ward, and S. Simons. Kick-off at 3-30. The first match will be played at Harrow on September 22nd, with Bowes Park. Will any gentleman wishing to join kindly send in his name as soon as possible to either Mr. J. L. Winkley, College-road, or Mr. E. A. A. Cooke, High-street?

As the reason for the merger, the cup competitions and in particular the Middlesex Senior Cup was the focus of the season. The reserves entered both the Middlesex Junior and the West Middlesex Cups and the first team entered the same West Middlesex competition, paired with the County Senior Cup. After four consecutive wins in friendlies, the first team successfully got their challenge underway, when in .



**Harrow Observer 15<sup>th</sup> September 1894** late October they despatched a strong Caledonian Athletic side 2-0 on the Caledonians own ground in Finchley, despite the Page brothers being unavailable.

A fortnight later, the Reserves (once more a heavily Harrow influenced team) fought out a 3-3 draw with Stanmore at Greenhill in the Middlesex Junior Cup, but they were eliminated from the competition the following week in the replay, losing 1-0 away from home. The first team then drew 1-1 with Hounslow in the Senior competition, winning the replay convincingly, 4-0 on the same day that the reserves lost their first and only tie in the West Middlesex Cup competition by 1-7 at home to Yiewsley, ending their cup involvement for the season.

Aside from the result, it was not a good day for EJ Fisk, who became the first 'Harrow' player recorded as sent off. The Uxbridge newspaper recorded "*A regrettable incident here occurred, Fisk being ordered off the field by the referee for making some uncomplimentary remarks concerning him (some of his decisions having given umbrage to the home team), but we think that the official should have cautioned the player before ordering him to leave. The home team were consequently obliged to finish the game with four forwards only*". Yiewsley were winning 4-0 at the time.

By mid-January, the first team were ready to play their next two ties. First up was a West Middlesex Cup tie that the club was expected to win with some ease. They did not disappoint running out winners over a Hayes team at home by 13-1, with the in-form Parker scoring six times. They followed that with a Senior Cup win seven days later, beating Queens Park Rangers 2-1 in front of 500 people as the home fans took a greater interest in the team.

Heavy frost caused the postponement of matches for the following two weeks and it was hoped that this would not disrupt the good form that the Athletic had shown since the turn of the year. Across the three teams, seven matches had been played and each had been won. The frost meant that the Harrow side would next play in another Middlesex Cup tie and this time the visitors to Greenhill were Brentford. The home fans were not disappointed as the visitors were defeated 3-2, exactly the score by which Harrow beat Southall on their own ground the following week in the West Middlesex Cup. These were tough games against good strong opponents, so with each win, Harrow's prospects of silverware looked to have improved greatly.

In the following weeks, Queens Park Rangers gained a little revenge over Harrow in a friendly on their ground at Shepherds Bush, winning 3-2 in front of a crowd of over 1,500 (for the friendly match), the majority keen for the home club to exact some revenge. It was the only defeat in four matches as Harrow prepared once again to play consecutive cup ties, this time the semi-finals of both the Middlesex and West Middlesex competitions. The first of the semi-finals was a match at Southall against the 2<sup>nd</sup> Scots Guards. The match was played in front of over 2,000 fans and on a good pitch a real end to end tie was played out: "*the speed of the Wealdstone forwards their greatest asset, though it was countered by the weight and strength of the Guardsmen. Despite numerous chances for both sets of forwards, on occasion their aim was off and when good, the respective goalkeepers were up to their jobs, ensuring the match resulted in a draw, 0-0*". The replay scheduled for the same ground on the following Saturday.

On the designated afternoon, a similar crowd in the region of 2,000 was anticipating another even contest but it was not to be. A strong wind was blowing from one goal to the other and the Guards won the toss, deciding to kick with the wind in the first half. They kicked off and immediately pressed forward and within about twenty minutes had scored four times. The fourth of these goals when Page the Harrow goalkeeper was charged while holding the ball (allowed at the time) and knocked over the goal line. Unfortunately, he was also injured in the melee which caused further problems for the Harrow team. By half time, the Guards were winning 7-0 with Harrow's chances all but gone, and so it proved as they were soundly beaten 10-1.

The Athletic's last remaining hope of silverware was the West Middlesex Cup where their semi-final opponents were the same as the previous season, the 8<sup>th</sup> Hussars, who they had beaten 5-3 on their way to winning the trophy. The Harrow side was forced to make a number of changes with players unavailable due to the Easter holidays, and they journeyed back to the same ground at Southall with three of the second team in their line-up. Though they competed well, they were beaten by the better side on the day, losing 1-2.

The season had ended with two semi-final defeats despite an excellent record throughout the year that saw the Harrow Athletic first team play 27 matches, winning 21 and drawing and losing 3 each. The record that was sufficient for the club to win the Middlesex Courier Cup awarded by the newspaper of that name, the table calculated on a points basis for matches won and drawn among the clubs within the newspaper's distribution area. There were 36 teams included in the final table, Harrow winning with a total of 42 points from Metropolitan FC (37) and Christ Church (Hendon) (34).

**Wealdstone Athletic Club.**—Mr. A. Foster McAdam presided over the general meeting of the cricket section of the Wealdstone Athletic Club, held at the Railway Hotel, on Wednesday evening. There was a rather poor attendance, but the Pinner Fair and the horse racing were undoubtedly responsible for this. Amongst those present were—Messrs. H. Hills, J. Poole, W. Fleet, A. Dodd, J. Proud, A. Parker, E. Mole, H. Lander, A. Whiston, &c. The Chairman having stated the nature of the proceedings, Mr. Poole proposed, and Mr. Harry Hills seconded, that Mr. Russell Bradberry be captain of the Cricket Club for the ensuing year. The motion was unanimously carried.—Mr. Harry Hills was then elected vice-captain, and Mr. Poole secretary.—The committee was appointed as follows:—Messrs. C. Rowley, C. Hills, G. Lander, A. Foster McAdam, C. Lovett, W. Fleet, H. Harden, A. Dodd, and E. Mole.—Messrs. H. Hills, W. Fleet, and A. Dodd were appointed a committee to draw up the rules and to submit them to the adjourned meeting, and Messrs. Rowley, Hills, and Poole were requested to see certain articles for sale to learn if they were suitable for club purposes.—It was decided to hold the adjourned meeting next Wednesday, at eight o'clock, at the Railway Hotel, when the arrangements for football will be made.

Harrow Gazette 7<sup>th</sup> June 1895

## 1895-96

I hope Wealdstone will be able to raise a decent team. Are all the Wealdstone players who were in last year's Harrow team going to play for their "own country?" They certainly strengthened the H. A. C. ranks last season; but one missed those stirring matches that used to be played two years ago at Greenhill. I, for one, shall be heartily glad to hear the old cry again—"Play up, Stones!"

—o—

Can anyone tell me what became of the balance that was in hand when the Wealdstone Football Club decided not to fix any more matches? To the best of my recollection it was placed in the Bank until such time as a club was revived in the district. Would not the Wealdstone Athletic Club be justified in claiming it?

—o—

Harrow Observer 24<sup>th</sup> August 1895

At the end of the season, it became more evident that a number of former Wealdstone players were a little disheartened by the lack of opportunities, despite the Harrow Athletic club running three football teams for most Saturdays of the season.

When it was announced that a new athletic club was to be formed, this time the Wealdstone Athletic Club, there was some immediate interest from players in returning to their home village. This was added to when Mr. JE Lilley offered to preside over the formation of the new club while H Hills was elected vice-captain of the Cricket Section and appointed to the committee. Another former Wealdstone player, J Poole was appointed to the position of secretary. All three were also instrumental in the formation of a football section for the new Athletic Club.

The new club was not truly a continuation of the 'blue blood line' that had been the First Wealdstone FC, but there were certainly enough links for it to be considered a very close relative.

There was division among the former Wealdstone players at Harrow Athletic, as those regularly playing for the senior Harrow side in the main remained with the club, while some of the fringe and reserve players moved on and were involved from the very beginning with Wealdstone Athletic. During the season, others were to return and represent the new Wealdstone side, but many did remain with Harrow for the remainder of their careers, the Harrow Athletic club itself continuing to field football teams until circa 1909.



Initially, six players from Harrow Athletic joined the new side where they joined six more players that had been part of the Wealdstone FC team two years earlier. With their former Chairman Mr. JE Lilley at the head of the new club, in addition to Poole and Hills, two more former Wealdstone players, F Little and E Dove were also to take up places on the Wealdstone Athletic Club committee.



1895 - 1896

Wealdstone Athletic

The original Wealdstone club had been put into abeyance by the merger with Harrow Athletic, and as shown by the Harrow Observer comments it was felt at the time that this new Wealdstone Athletic Club was a direct descendant of that line, even to the extent that monies held over from the first

may be claimed by the second. Certainly, they had both players and officials in common, but nothing formal to establish a direct link has been identified.

At the first General Meeting of the football section, the secretary announced that they had already got a squad of twenty players for the first team and fifteen youths were eager

to join the reserve section if a reduced fee could be accepted. It bore promise of a good competitive side, but the new club started the season with a run of defeats, not recording their first win until mid-October against opponents unknown, as press coverage again was sporadic. (A victory is mentioned in the Harrow Observer, but the opponents, scoreline and scorers are not!) It was also reported by 'Referee' *"that one or two players of*

Wealdstone won their first match of the season last Saturday, and as I hear that one or two players of some repute—it was even whispered to me that one had got his cap (county, I mean)—have sent in their names, there is no reason why they should not go on winning. The following strong team will do duty tomorrow:—Goal, H. Hills; backs, G. Smith and F. Hone; halves, H. Cooper, A. Brown, and C. Rogers; forwards, A. Poole, G. Wells, J. Bailey, F. Little, and F. Welch. Reserves—J. Poole, W. Rosen, W. Cozen, and A. Cozen.

**Harrow Observer 18<sup>th</sup> October 1895**

had travelled away from home with nine and ten men.

The form did improve with a run of good wins up to Christmas, but early in the new year, yet another issue rose its head, with a number of matches being played on an alternate home ground as the field they had initially secured as their home pitch was in such a bad state it could not be played on.

Despite having ended 1895 with some positive results January saw defeats and only one draw, and (not for the first time) the team failed to arrive at Wembley at all. The local rivals got their revenge for a wasted afternoon two weeks later when they visited Wealdstone Athletic and beat them 11-0.

It was to be a short-lived existence for the football section of the Wealdstone Athletic Club as continuing ground problems and player unavailability proved insurmountable problems. As the season ran to a close, there were reports of further matches started with only nine men with players *"refusing to play due to water between the*

**The Wealdstone Football Club.** — A general meeting of the Football Section of the Wealdstone Athletic Club was held at the Case is Altered, on Tuesday evening. Notwithstanding the heavy downpour of rain there was a good muster of members. Mr. A. Foster McAdam was voted to the chair, and amongst those present were Messrs. A. Dodd, H. Hills, A. Mole, J. Poole, J. Harden, Pitt, Rogers, E. Little, H. Cooper, &c., &c. The chairman having announced the object of the meeting, and expressed the hope that the members would take more interest in the club and the matches, the election of officers was proceeded with and resulted as follows: Captain, Harry Hills; vice-captain, E. Dove; hon. sec. E. Little; Committee—J. Poole, J. K. Bailey, G. Smith, H. Hills, E. Dove, H. Cooper, F. Little, A. Foster McAdam and H. Gill. The secretary announced that he had about twenty good playing members for the first team, and that about fifteen youths were eager to join the reserve if a reduced fee was accepted. It was decided to approach the council on the matter.

**Harrow Gazette 18<sup>th</sup> October 1895**

*some repute – it was even whispered that one had got his cap (County I mean) - have sent in their names, there is no reason why they should not go on winning".*

A further five matches were played prior to their second victory including defeats to local rivals Wembley and Stanmore, before in mid-November, Bushey Rovers Reserves were beaten 2-0. The results themselves were of less consequence than the cause. A number of players had already left the fledgling Wealdstone club and on at least two occasions, they

The Wealdstone players are very, very erratic. One week they establish a record by turning up to a man, and then the very next an eleven cannot be got for love or mo—I was nearly saying money. One gentleman connected with the team was heard humming "Oh! had I the wings of a bird," and straightway he assumed the shape of a "Dove" and flew off to other football fields. The Wealdstone committee, will have to "ring" this "Dove," or put a pinch of salt on his tail.

**Harrow Observer 9<sup>th</sup> November 1895**

*goalposts and the overall poor condition of the ground*". Even moving to adjacent pitches didn't resolve the situation, which threatened the demise of the club at the end of the season.

Despite the efforts of those involved, the Athletics were unable to secure a better field for the following season and the football section was disbanded, ending the remaining links with the very first Wealdstone FC.

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